

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4386

AMEMBASSY LISBON

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

AMEMBASSY MADRID

USMISSION USNATO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 16949

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PO, UR

SUBJ: SOVIET-PORTUGUESE RELATIONS

REF: A. LISBON 4750 (NOTAL) B. MOSCOW 16803

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1. PORTUGUESE AMBASSADOR NEVES PRESENTED HIS CREDENTIALS TO ILYASHENKO BECAUSE PODGORNYY WAS NOT APPEARING IN PUBLIC AT THAT TIME. ILYASHENKO IS ONE OF 14 DEPUTY CHAIRMEN OF THE SUPREME SOVIET PRESIDUM. THESE DEPUTIES ROTATE ON A MONTHLY BASIS AND FILL IN FOR PODGORNYY WHEN THE NEED ARISES. THUS, THE PROTOCOL IN THIS CASE IS PROPER.

2. WE UNDERSTAND THAT NEVES PRESENTED HIS CREDENTIALS THE DAY AFTER THIS ARRIVAL; SUCH HASTE IS EXTREMELY UNUSUAL. ORDINARILY, A NEW AMBASSADOR WOULD PRESENT THEM TO PODGORNYY AFTER SEVERAL DAYS OR WEEKS HERE, BUT
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THE SOVIETS SEEMED ANXIOUS TO HAVE NEVES ACCREDITED

BEFORE CUNHAL ARRIVED IN ORDER TO UNDERLINE THAT THE VISIT WAS ON BOTH THE GOVERNMENT AND PARTY LEVELS. PODGORNÝ'S MEETING WITH CUNHAL ON NOVEMBER 2 WAS HIS FIRST OFFICIAL FUNCTION IN 14 DAYS, AGAIN UNDERLINING THE IMPORTANCE WHICH MOSCOW ATTACHES TO ITS BLOSSOMING RELATIONSHIP WITH LISBON.

3. A PRAVDA COMMENTARY (NOVEMBER 6) BY VLADIMIR YERMAKOV PRASIED THE CUNHAL VISIT AS A STEP TOWARDS CLOSER COOPERATION BETWEEN THE TWO PEOPLES AND GOVERNMENTS. IN ADDITIONS, THE COMMENTARY FOCUSED ON THE BROADER EUROPEAN ASPECTS OF THE NEW RELATIONSHIP AND SAW IT "STRENGTHENING CONTINENT." THE ARTICLE MADE NO MENTION OF PORTUGAL'S TIES WITH THE U.S. OR NATO.

4. SOVIET MINISTER OF MARITIME FLEET GUZHENKO TOLD TASS ON NOVEMBER 6 THAT THE PORTUGUESE HAD LOOKED FAVORABLY ON AN AGREEMENT ON MARITIME COOPERATION AND PROMISED TO EVALUATE THE SOVIET PROPOSAL IN THE VERY NEAR FUTURE. GUZHENKO SAID THAT HE HAD DISCUSSED SCHEDULING REGULAR PORT CALLS BY EACH COUNTRY'S VESSELS DURING HIS MEETING WITH CUNHAL ON NOVEMBER 1. END LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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5. BRITISH AMBASSADOR GARVEY COMMENTED THAT THE SOVIETS SEEMED EAGER TO CLOSE THE "DOCUMENT GAP" AS A SIGN OF FULL NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS. BASING HIS COMMENTS ON REMARKS BY PORTUGUESE COUNSELOR ANDRADE, GARVEY SAID THAT THE TRADE TALKS HAD NOT SPECIFIED WHETHER THE EXCHANGES WERE TO BE FOR BARTER OR CASH. THE SOVIETS HAD PRESSED FOR CIVIL AIR LANDING RIGHTS IN LISBON BUT HAD NOT SPECIFIED DETAILS ON FREQUENCY OR CONNECTING POINTS OF FLIGHTS. BESIDES CUNHAL THE MOST IMPORTANT MEMBER OF THE DELEGATION HAD BEEN STATE SECRETARY OF INFORMATION CONSECAO Y SILVA; ONLY THOSE TWO ATTENDED THE MEETING WITH PODGORNÝ AND PRONOMAREV. ON NATO, ANDRADE SAID THAT THE PORTUGUESE COMMUNIST PARTY HAD RECENTLY REVISED ITS TENETS TO TAKE A MORE PRACTICAL

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WORLD VIEW. THE PORTUGUESE COMMUNISTS, HE SAID, WERE IN NO HURRY TO FULFILL THEIR ULTIMATE OBJECTIVES AND THE SOVIETS SEEMED TO UNDERSTAND THIS POSITION. TO GARVEY'S QUESTION ABOUT A POSSIBLE BACKLASH IN PORTUGAL, ANDRADE SAID THAT IT WOULD DEPEND ON HOW THE COMMUNISTS PLAYED THEIR CARDS. A BACKLASH WAS LIKELY IN SOME AREAS IF THE COMMUNISTS TRY TO MOVE TOO FAR TOO FAST.

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